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THE CRISIS IN RACE RELATIONS

VOL. 7

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THE EDITORS

Civil Liberties Today:

A Review of Corliss Lamont's New Book

By HENRY PRATT FAIRCHILD

EDITORS . . . LEO HUBERMAN . . . PAUL M. SWEENEY

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NOTES FROM THE EDITORS

On March 8, the New Hampshire Supreme Court unanimously ruled against Paul Sweezy in his case arising from that state's investigation of "subversive activities." The opinion has the merit of defining the academic-freedom issues involved in the case with notable clarity. It concedes that the questioning to which Sweezy was subjected "undoubtedly interfered with the defendant's free exercise" of liberties which are "guaranteed to every citizen by the State and Federal Constitutions." But it justifies this interference as falling within "the limited area in which the legislative committee may reasonably believe that the overthrow of existing government by force and violence is being or has been taught, advocated or planned, an area in which the interest of the State justifies this intrusion upon civil liberties." The defense contention, of course, is that there isn't and never was the slightest reason for such a belief and that the nature of the questions asked showed that the real object of the investigation was "dangerous thoughts" and not violent overthrow of constitutional government. The case will now be appealed to the United States Supreme Court, and the Court's decision may well have fateful consequences for academic freedom in this country. If such questions

(continued on inside back cover)

THE CRISIS IN RACE RELATIONS

Never before have we known such prosperity as we now enjoy—this is the boast of the Republicans through the President's annual *Economic Report* to the Congress. A Democratic-controlled joint committee of Senate and House members promptly expresses its basic agreement (*New York Times*, March 2). Ten long years since World War II, and nothing even approaching a major economic crash! And on the foundation of this unprecedented economic stability there has been superimposed a no-less remarkable political stability. There are, quite literally, no important issues between the dominant factions of the Republican and Democratic Parties. Policywise—as distinct from the issue of which individuals and groups enjoy the perquisites of power—it couldn't matter less whether Eisenhower or Stevenson sits in the White House, whether Democrats under Johnson and Rayburn or Republicans under Knowland and Martin organize the Congress.

All this seems to bear out fully the hopes and anticipations of capitalism's more thoughtful supporters. The system's Achilles heel, they argue, is its susceptibility to major economic crises: it is the agonies of bankruptcy and mass unemployment that produce political upheavals, whether they be of the New Deal or the Hitlerite variety. Stabilize the economy at a high level of employment, and political calm will follow. Capitalism, cured of what the Cassandras once thought a mortal illness, will then be able to thumb its nose at its detractors—and live happily ever after. Back in the days of Keynes and FDR, we are told, this was still only a theory. Today, after ten years of solid experience, it is proven fact.

Could illusion and self-deception go further? Could boasting and complacency be more out of place? The fabled visitor from Mars, having caught up with the last few weeks' newspapers, could hardly be blamed if he found these the most puzzling of all questions about the strange creatures who inhabit the earth.

The world position of the Anglo-American partnership is deteriorating at a rate which must leave even the most sanguine anti-imperialist gasping. And what does the heroism of Autherine Lucy and the wonderful solidarity of the fifty thousand bus-boycotters of Montgomery signify if not that the American people are coming face

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to face with the gravest and potentially most explosive social crisis in nearly a hundred years?

A stable society indeed! One that is traveling the road to isolation in a world in which no nation can live alone! One that is in imminent danger of renewing a struggle that has already cost the bloodiest civil war in history! The gods on Olympus may well laugh at the cosmic irony of their handiwork. It used to be said that whom they would destroy they first make mad: today it is apparently enough to endow their victims with a capitalist mentality.

How long can the glaring contradiction last between economic prosperity and bipartisan political calm on the one hand and mounting international and social crises on the other? How will it be resolved? What form will the resolution take? No one can yet give assured answers to these questions, but no one should be under any illusions about their momentous importance *in the immediate future*. Now is the time to begin to devote to them all the intelligence and analytical power we can possibly muster. In this issue's Review of the Month, we propose to examine, within the context of these questions, the nature and implications of the mounting race-relations crisis in the South.

Let us begin by calling attention to some things that are, or should be, well known but that even the most heedful of us may tend to forget in the welter of interested propaganda and outright lies amidst which we live.

The kind of race antagonism which characterizes Negro-white relations in the United States today (in the North as well as in the South: the difference is one of degree, not of kind) is neither "natural" to human beings nor even historically old.* It has its origins in the early capitalist period, some three centuries ago, when the rising bourgeoisie of Europe was chasing all over the earth in search of loot and profits. One of the greatest needs of the period was for exploitable labor, and the invading white man's solution was to subject and enslave the militarily weaker colored peoples. To justify their brutal and un-Christian behavior, our devoutly Christian forebears needed, and in due course elaborated, the ideological doctrine of white supremacy and colored inferiority. And wherever white and colored workers coexisted in the same society, the white rulers deliberately fostered and incited race antagonism as a means of controlling both groups and in order to have at their disposal a special class of helots to do the dirtiest work for the lowest reward.

* In what follows we have relied heavily on Oliver Cox's *Caste, Class, and Race* (1948), a classic of American social science which the authorities, academic and otherwise, have honored with the silent treatment reserved for works which lay bare the inner mechanisms of American capitalism.

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The history of race relations in the United States has been but a variation on this central theme. Outright slavery "broke in" African labor to the demands of the Southern plantation economy. The Civil War abolished slavery and with it the methods by which the Southern oligarchy had up to then controlled its labor force. New methods were needed, and it was in these circumstances that the present-day system of segregation took root and developed.

Segregation is crucial to the maintenance of the present complex structure of social classes and power relations in the South. By keeping whites and Negroes apart in their social lives, it fosters the development of racial myths and helps to inculcate in the white masses emotions of fear and hatred toward Negroes. The two communities are prevented from developing a common culture, their working class elements are barred from making common cause against their joint exploiters. Negroes are in effect imprisoned in an economic and cultural ghetto, and their visible "backwardness" provides "proof" of their inferiority. Both white and Negro workers are thus more easily exploited, and white workers are made to do a large part of the work of "keeping the Negro in his place." The Southern oligarchy, though economically obsolescent in a world in which King Cotton has been dethroned and corporate capital has taken its place, maintains social status and political power by tightly controlling the racial situation through the instrumentality of segregation.

Two conclusions of fundamental importance to an understanding of the present situation follow logically from this analysis. First, segregation is rooted in, indeed can accurately be described as an aspect of, the class struggle between employers and workers. And second, since segregation is in no sense natural but is imposed on society by a small minority in order to maintain its privileged position, the shibboleths and taboos which sustain it must be inculcated afresh in every rising generation. This second point goes very far toward explaining the bitterness and intensity of the present crisis.

The chief mechanisms by which ideas and ideologies are implanted in the minds of the young are the home and the school. And in general the two have worked closely together in this country to produce a docile and conforming citizenry.* In the South, segregation in education has been fundamental to the whole system. By living

* Some have been misled into believing that the public school system is a leveling institution which works against the formation and differentiation of social classes, and in this sense is basically opposed to the structure of an increasingly class-divided society. This is a fallacy which it is one of the great merits of W. Lloyd Warner and his associates to have exposed. See in particular Warner, Meeker and Eels, *Social Class in America*, pp. 24-33, and the works cited therein.

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segregation from their early years, white children have been conditioned to accept it as "natural," inevitable, necessary. School has thus teamed up with home to indoctrinate them with all the myths and stereotypes of racist ideology. To maintain this pattern in education has been crucially important precisely because racial prejudice is *not* natural to children: left to themselves, kids associate freely without any regard to skin color (the evidence on this point is overwhelming). Hence the attack on segregation in the elementary schools is an attack on the whole Southern system in one of its most vulnerable spots. Hence also the intensity and passion with which the attack has been and is being resisted.

What lies behind this attack, and why is it coming to a head just now?

Part of the answer to these questions is obvious. Apart from its more cowed and backward elements, the Negro community has always decisively rejected segregation and fought for its abolition. Since the early years of the twentieth century, this struggle has taken on an increasingly organized and effective form. In the North, Negroes have won the vote and learned to play politics in their own interest. Gradually, at times imperceptibly, but inexorably the barriers of segregation have been chipped away and undermined. Last year's Supreme Court decision outlawing segregation in the public schools was by far the biggest victory yet won by the Negro community, but essentially it was no more than a logical step in a long and uninterrupted process—and it was won by the organized efforts and political power of Negroes themselves.

But this is not the whole story by any means. Negroes are not so powerful that they can simply impose their will on the Supreme Court, which after all is the judicial upholder of the interests of the dominant capitalist class and not the impartial dispenser of justice of our political folklore. There must have been a strong disposition in ruling-class circles to accept the Negro point of view rather than to close ranks with the Southern oligarchy. Any analysis of the present situation which neglects this factor is bound to be incomplete and misleading.

Up to a point, of course, the ruling-class approach to this question has been affected by the international situation. When you are desperately striving abroad to line up hundreds of millions of colored people on your side in a cold war against a system that not only preaches but consistently practices racial democracy, you can ill afford to insult them by treating them as second-class citizens at home.

But even this isn't the whole story. In addition, there is the fact, which has been given less attention than it deserves, that industrial capital, specially of the large-scale corporate variety, is essentially

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color-blind and tends to find in segregation an annoying barrier to the full and rational exploitation of the labor force. Big employers are as interested as any in getting their labor cheap, but they also want to be able to assign workers to jobs by productivity standards and to allow them to advance in accordance with native ability and acquired skill. Segregation, in other words, makes sense from the point of view of any employer, business or household, who can benefit from the exploitation of a *special* class of backward and unskilled labor, but in general this is not the point of view of industrial capital. Henry Ford, for example, was one of the most bigoted of Americans, but he was also one of the first large-scale employers of Negro labor in regular industrial operations; and the integration of Negroes into a single homogeneous labor force has gone furthest in the great mass-production centers like Detroit, Chicago, and Pittsburgh. Moreover, it is surely no accident that desegregation has proceeded relatively rapidly and smoothly in the armed forces where the attitudes and influence of Big Business are particularly strong.

There are, of course, plenty of exceptions to the rule that big capital is color blind, but on the whole it holds good and goes far to explain why the accelerated development of monopoly capital in the postwar period has been favorable to the Negro struggle to end segregation.

A closely related development in the South itself also deserves emphasis in this connection. Industrialization has made giant strides in the South in the last decade and a half, mostly under the aegis of big corporations with nationwide interests. Many Northern executives have moved into the area, and many younger Southerners have begun to substitute the folkways of Big Business for the folkways of the old oligarchy. In the larger cities such as Atlanta and Richmond, the economic position of Negro workers has tended to improve and, as always, enhanced social status and a greater share of political power have followed along. To be sure, these changes have been largely confined to the municipal level as yet—the South's traditional political structure, with its heavy over-representation of rural areas, has seen to that—but they have not been without influence among both Negroes and whites all over the country. Perceptive observers everywhere sense that the South is entering a New Era and they know, whether or not they approve, that it must and will include a New Deal in the whole field of race relations.

In one sense, this analysis is definitely on the optimistic side. In their struggle for racial democracy, the Negro community has a strong ally in the self-interest of big capital, which is the real ruler of America. (The Negro struggle has also received some assistance and support from the organized labor movement, but *far* less than

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it could and ought to get. The truth is that until the labor movement expels Jim Crow from its own ranks it will never be able to bring to bear its full potential strength for greater equality and progress in the community at large.) Without this ally, the gains of the postwar period would certainly have been fewer and harder to come by, and the outlook for the period ahead would be darker than it is. But this should not lead us to misunderstand the present situation. Negroes can no more count on salvation from Big Business than can workers in general. And, as can clearly be seen from the current vacillations of the Eisenhower administration, Big Business has now reached the point where it is torn between continuing to lend support, even if only indirect, to the cause of Negro rights, and a policy of conciliating the Southern oligarchy.

Why? Here we reach the nub of the whole crisis.

Now that the issue of segregation in the schools has been straightforwardly posed, the Negro struggle has reached a turning point. The die has been cast, and there can be no turning back. But to go ahead requires what amounts to total defeat for the Southern oligarchy. Obviously, the oligarchy is not going to give in to sweet reason even if it takes the form of a Supreme Court decision, and equally obviously the Negro community is in no position to enforce the law. The issue is therefore squarely up to the federal government. Will it now follow up what the Supreme Court has so auspiciously begun? Or will it back down and leave the oligarchy in possession of the field of battle?

It is nonsense to say that the federal government lacks the power to pursue the former course (we do not mean that new legislation might not be required, but nothing that the Republicans and Northern Democrats, both supposedly champions of Negro rights, couldn't put through in a week if they wanted to). The oligarchy will certainly not risk a repetition of the Civil War, and a policy based on individual or collective acts of terrorism would not be likely to survive an honest and determined campaign to bring the perpetrators to justice. Moreover, there are many means at the disposal of the federal government to undermine the power of the oligarchy—federal supervision of federal elections or reduction of Southern representation in Congress to accord with voting rather than total population are two such methods (recently suggested by Dr. Du Bois in the *National Guardian*, March 5). No, what the federal government lacks is not power but will power. It could uphold the Constitution and enforce the law in the South if it were only half as anxious to apprehend and punish violators as it has been to jail the leaders of the already impotent Communist Party.

At first sight, it would appear that we have landed ourselves

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in a hopeless paradox. On the one hand, it is politically (in terms of Negro votes and international prestige) and economically (in terms of profits) advantageous to big capital to support and assist the struggle for Negro emancipation. And yet when it comes to the sticking point, the federal government, which is controlled more tightly by big capital than any of its predecessors, does nothing—which means in effect taking sides with the Southern oligarchy.

It is a paradox. But it can be explained, and the explanation throws a flood of light on all the other paradoxes and contradictions of American society.

The truth is that big capital's control over the political life of the country is exercised through a delicate and complicated mechanism in which the Southern oligarchy plays a key part. To deal the oligarchy a series of political body blows at this time would not only earn the latter's undying enmity; much more important, it would risk knocking the whole political system into a cocked hat. And once that happened, who can guarantee that another system could be devised which would perform the miraculous feat of keeping all the great issues of the day out of politics? Indeed, who could even *imagine* another such wonderful arrangement?

We are all familiar with the system and how it works, though we are perhaps insufficiently aware of its ingenious and delicate nature. It consists of government by two parties, each with a "liberal" and a "reactionary" wing. The right wing of the Republican Party is made up of a motley crew of know-nothings and warmongers whose chief function is to make the status quo seem positively progressive: whenever a showdown threatens, we are all called upon to rally to the support of the moderates (just now in the person of Ike) against the menace of the diehards (who, strangely enough, include in their ranks Ike's closest collaborators: the Vice President, the Secretary of State, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the GOP Senate leader). The *modus operandi* of the Democratic Party is somewhat different. Here the emphasis is all on the liberal side. The Democratic Party is the Party of Jefferson and Jackson, of FDR and the New Deal. It speaks for the worker and the small farmer; it carries the hope of a brighter future for America. But it just happens to include in its ranks the Southern oligarchy whose future is in the past and not very bright either. By a variety of devices—not least that which assigns Congressional committee chairmanships on a basis of seniority—the Southerners are given effective control over the actual political behavior (as distinct from the alleged principles) of the Party. The labor movement and liberals generally are chained to the Democratic chariot by the argument that the way forward lies through strengthening the forward-looking wing of the Party, while

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the leaders of that wing, like Mr. Stevenson, turn themselves inside-out to appease the Southerners. (Stevenson's immediate motives, which are doubtless perfectly sincere, have to do with fear of losing Southern support to another candidate or, in an actual election, votes to a new Dixiecrat movement. But whatever their motives, the fact is that all Democratic Presidents, including both Roosevelt and Truman, *neither of whom was dependent for nomination or election on Southern support*, have been effectively hobbled by the Southern wing of their party.)

What the American political system amounts to is thus an elaborate make-believe in which the "liberal" Republicans pretend to block reaction and the "liberal" Democrats pretend to overcome it, while in practice "liberals" and "reactionaries" of every kind and description team up to keep all real issues out of politics and to manage the socio-economic system in the interests of big capital.

Now it is precisely this make-believe that the race-relations crisis threatens to explode once and for all. If the moderates of both parties follow through on the Supreme Court decision—which means no more and no less than upholding the Constitution and enforcing the law—they will be signing the political death warrant of the Southern oligarchy, which simply cannot survive the end of segregation. But with the Southern oligarchy knocked out, the whole system of automatic political checks and balances will be smashed. The Democratic Party will lose its one persuasive excuse for breaking all its promises and will either have to *become* a party of reform, or—what seems much more likely—give way to a *new* party of reform in the manner of the Liberal Party in Britain some half century ago.

To put the matter in a nutshell: behind the race-relations crisis stands the specter of a new political party with an enormous potential vote among white workers and Negroes of all classes, a party unencumbered by the hateful reactionaries of the South and hence subject to the influence and will of its members as the Democratic Party has never been. This is the specter that is haunting America today, and it is this that keeps omnipotent capital cowering before the blustering threats of an arrogant but basically weak minority. For as soon as the long-delayed political realignment gets under way, *all* the great issues of the day, and not only the issue of Negro emancipation, will crowd onto the political stage. And when that happens, the policies, and ultimately the very power, of big capital itself face a challenge—this time not of a handful of fanatical racists but of the largest and in many ways the most advanced working class in the world.

The American Left has been bemused for a long time now by the idea that only a severe depression could create a new political situa-

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tion with new perspectives and new opportunities. We can now see that this is wrong. The struggle for Negro rights has produced a crisis of the first magnitude, and out of it can come the new political alignment which liberals and leftists alike have long been hoping and striving for. It is up to us of the Left to do our part to see that this comes about. We must lend every ounce of support we can to the struggle of the Negro community for desegregation and racial equality. We must bring all the pressure we can on the federal government to uphold the Constitution and enforce the law. We must strive to win understanding—especially in the trade unions—of the life and death character of the struggle shaping up around the issue of Negro rights in the South. We must explain the importance of, and ceaselessly agitate for, democratic political reform in the South. Finally—and this will probably be particularly difficult for many of us to grasp and accept—we must work not to *elect* the Democratic Party but to *explode* it and thus to clear the ground for the upbuilding of a new party which will reflect and further the interests of the working people, both black and white.

A GREAT LABOR ORGANIZER

Call the roll of American heroes whose praises are sung in our history books: you will find generals, presidents, a few inventors—but no working class “greats,” no poor people. Of course the histories go into much detail about the humble beginnings of some of our heroes—thus helping to perpetuate the American Dream—but they become heroes in these stories only *after* they have risen above their class. You will search in vain for the story of a man who is considered great because of his achievements on behalf of the working class, one who remained a member of that class.

These thoughts are prompted by the news that William Z. Foster has just celebrated his 75th birthday. He was born on February 25, 1881, in Taunton, Massachusetts, one of 23 children. His parents were poor, and he sold newspapers while going to school from 7 to 10 years of age. That was the extent of his formal schooling; at 10 he went to work. At 14 he participated in his first strike, that of

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the Philadelphia street carmen in 1895, in which, he reports, "I, together with other strikers and sympathizing workers, was clubbed and ridden down by mounted police." This was his baptism of fire in the trade-union movement. In the course of the quarter of a century of work that followed in various industries all over the country—chemicals, meat packing, agriculture, lumber, metals, marine transport, building construction, and railroads—he never worked less than a 60-hour week.

Foster became a socialist in 1900 after listening to a street-corner speaker in Philadelphia. A year later, he joined the Socialist Party, at the time of its founding. Following the Socialist Party split in 1909, he helped form the Wage Workers Party in Seattle in 1910. In the nearby city of Spokane in that year, the IWW was conducting one of its famous free-speech fights, and, with characteristic vigor, Foster threw himself into the struggle. With 600 others, he was arrested and thrown into jail. During his two-month jail sentence, he became a member of the IWW. For a decade thereafter, he was in the thick of almost every big labor battle, hoboing his way across country in the fashion of Wobbly organizers of that day. In 1919, the Communist Party was founded, and two years later Foster became a member. He has been a top leader ever since, and it was while campaigning as its candidate for President in 1932 that he suffered his first heart attack.

It is as a trade union organizer that Foster has made his greatest contribution to the working-class movement. He saw clearly the need for organization on an industrial-union basis 18 years before the CIO was born. The industrial federation of AFL craft unions which he set up in 1917 in the victorious struggle against the Big Five in the packinghouse industry was an application, in modified form, of the industrial union principle. Never before in American labor history had a mass-production industry been so thoroughly organized—native and foreign-born, skilled and unskilled, Negro and white. Some 200,000 workers all over the country won the basic 8-hour day with 10 hours pay, a wage increase of 10 to 25 percent, equal pay for women, and a guarantee in slack seasons of five days of work each week.

A year later, Foster took on an even more powerful foe—the formidable open-shop steel industry. Hampered in every way by the bureaucracy of the AFL, he nevertheless led the drive which succeeded in organizing some 365,000 steel workers in 50 cities—with an organizing campaign fund that started out at only \$1,400. Although the three-and-a-half-month Great Steel Strike, in which thousands were arrested, hundreds clubbed, and 22 killed, had finally to be called off without achieving immediate permanent union

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organization, nevertheless the basic 8-hour day and other gains which were wrung from the industry in later years stemmed from this magnificent organizing effort of William Z. Foster. He laid the cornerstone for the building, in later years, of the United Steelworkers of America, as well as the United Packinghouse Workers of America. If, as he says, "Debs was the greatest agitator of the American revolutionary movement" and "Haywood was its most outstanding fighter," then, in all fairness, it should be added, "Foster has been its most successful trade union organizer."

And his work has always been done the hard way—he suffered hunger and cold, was shot at by gangsters, kidnapped by state police, beaten, imprisoned. Different times, different fashions in trade-union leaders. A few months ago AFL-CIO President George Meany, in a friendly talk to the National Association of Manufacturers, boasted:

It may interest you to know that . . . I never went on strike in my life. I never ran a strike in my life. I never ordered anyone to run a strike in my life, never had anything to do with a picket line.

Quite so. But there were Meanys in Foster's trade-union days, too. They were always busy making speeches at the top, while the Fosters were doing the hard work down below.

As one of the heads of the Communist Party, Foster must bear his share of responsibility for its failures. But he must also be given his full share of the credit for its successes—and there have been many of which the whole American Left can and should be proud. One of its finest achievements, in which Foster played his customary on-the-spot role, was its work on behalf of the unemployed in the early depression years of the 30s. On March 6, 1930, in the largest cities in the country, over a million people, led by the Communist Party, came out in a mass demonstration for relief and unemployment insurance. In Union Square in New York City, Foster gave the signal and more than 100,000 people began to march. In the onslaught that followed, hundreds of workers were clubbed by police, on foot and mounted. Foster and three other Communist leaders were arrested and sentenced to jail. He served six months in the New York County penitentiary, and the rest of his 3-year sentence on parole.

Today, unemployment insurance and social security are taken for granted along with the shorter hours, better conditions, and higher pay of unionized workers. But those who have understood labor history know that these gains were not handed down from above. They came only as the result of the tireless efforts of scores of working class heroes—men like William Z. Foster who chose, early in life, not to rise *above* their class but *with* it.

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CONSUMER DEBT AND INCOME

All analyses of the current business situation quite rightly stress the rapid rise of consumer debt during the last year as one of the main factors that have been sustaining the boom. Ever since we commented on this subject in the Review of the Month last October ("Boom, Bust, Depression"), we have been receiving letters indicating a great deal of interest in, and in some cases a rather distorted idea of, the basic facts. We therefore reproduce a table from the *Wall Street Journal* (January 6th), to which we have added the last two columns. In the table, "disposable income" (in billions of dollars) means total personal income less personal taxes:

Year	<i>Consumer Credit</i>		<i>Mortgage Debt</i>		<i>Total Consumer Debt</i>		
	Disposable Income	Dec. 31 Total	% of Disposable Income	Dec. 31 Total	% of Disposable Income	Dec. 31 Total	% of Disposable Income
1955	265.0	36.0	13.6	88.0	33.2	124.0	46.8
1954	254.8	30.1	11.8	76.0	29.8	106.1	41.6
1953	250.4	29.5	11.8	66.3	26.5	95.8	38.3
1952	236.7	25.8	10.9	58.7	24.8	84.5	35.7
1951	226.1	21.5	9.5	51.9	23.0	73.4	32.5
1950	206.1	20.8	10.1	45.1	21.9	65.9	32.0
1949	188.2	17.1	9.1	37.5	19.9	54.6	29.0
1948	187.6	14.4	7.7	33.3	17.8	47.7	25.5
1947	169.0	11.6	6.9	28.2	16.7	39.8	23.6
1946	159.2	8.4	5.3	23.1	14.5	31.5	19.8
1945	150.4	5.7	3.8	18.5	12.3	24.2	16.1
1944	146.8	5.1	3.5	17.9	12.2	23.0	15.7
1943	135.5	4.9	3.7	17.8	13.3	22.7	17.0
1942	117.5	6.0	5.1	18.2	15.5	24.2	20.6
1941	93.0	9.2	9.9	18.4	19.8	27.6	29.7
1940	76.1	8.3	10.9	17.3	22.7	25.6	33.6
1939	70.4	7.2	10.2	16.3	23.2	23.5	33.4
1938	65.7	6.3	9.6	17.4	26.5	23.7	36.1
1937	71.0	6.7	9.4	17.1	24.1	23.8	33.5
1936	66.2	6.1	9.2	17.0	25.7	23.1	34.9
1935	58.3	4.9	8.4	17.1	29.3	22.0	37.7
1934	52.0	3.9	7.5	17.2	33.1	21.1	40.6
1933	45.7	3.5	7.7	16.9	37.0	20.4	44.7
1932	48.7	3.6	7.4	18.1	37.2	21.7	44.6
1931	63.8	4.8	7.5	19.3	30.3	24.1	37.8
1930	74.4	5.8	7.8	19.9	26.7	25.7	34.5
1929	83.1	6.4	7.7	19.7	23.7	26.1	31.4

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("Consumer Credit" as defined in official statistics includes consumers' installment debt, chiefly for automobile purchases; house repair and modernization loans; personal loans; charge accounts; and various other types of personal debt, especially for services.)

Examination of this table shows that total consumer debt (consumer credit plus mortgage debt) was the highest on record at the end of last year, and also that the percentage it bears to disposable income had reached a peak. Paradoxically, the nearest percentage figure in the past was at the bottom of the Great Depression, but the reason for that of course was that income shrank much faster than debt from 1929 to 1933. If we compare the end of 1955 with the end of 1929, which is the most interesting comparison, we find that today consumer debt is going on half of disposable income while it was only about a third at the top of the previous era of prosperity.

There is certainly no magic figure beyond which the percentage of debt to income cannot pass without producing a catastrophe, but equally certainly debt cannot go on rising faster than income forever without causing economic trouble of the most serious kind. The fact that the ratio of consumer debt to disposable income is now about 50 percent above what it was in 1929 is not only a striking fact; it is also an economic danger signal and an indication that the recession from the present boom, of which there are plenty of signs these days, is likely to be considerably more drastic than the downturns of 1949 and 1954.

(March 15, 1956)

Tentative Publication Date—June

Was Justice Done?

THE ROSENBERG-SOBELL CASE

by

Malcolm Sharp, Professor at the University of Chicago Law School

with an Introduction by

Harold C. Urey, Professor at the University of Chicago

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MONTHLY REVIEW



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DO I HEAR 85 CENTS FROM GEORGIA?

The fundamental truth can no longer be concealed from mankind; the world has at its disposal enough resources to provide an adequate diet for everybody, everywhere. And if many of the guests on this earth have not yet been called to the table, it is because all known civilizations, including our own, have been organized on a basis of economic inequality.

—Josué de Castro, *The Geography of Hunger*

"WE ARE ALSO SUPERIOR..."

Recently, an American amateur baseball team visited South Africa. On arrival, each member received a letter, from which certain extracts are printed below. The logic of segregation is rarely revealed quite so boldly or publicly in the United States, but it is exactly the same logic. A copy of the letter was sent to us by a South African correspondent.—THE EDITORS

South African Baseball Board
17th November, 1955

Dear Basebeller,

This letter is being written with the idea of attempting to familiarize you with the few differences that exist in the manner of living in your country and in ours.

We spell some of our words differently, so if you come across anything that is not as you would spell the word, don't think "gee this fellow cannot spell correctly!" I find this most useful and am not troubling to use a dictionary [sic] on this occasion. Some expressions ordinarily used by you have a very different meaning here and possibly embarrassing. Please don't call anyone a Bum because the only meaning to that word we know applies to that part of the body which you sit upon, and people do not like to be compared with that part of your anatomy. You will see notices reading "Europeans Only"—well that word "European" just means that it applies to white people. It does not mean you have to be a European to enter, but only that you must be "white" before you are admitted, or sometimes it reads "Non-Europeans," then you cannot enter.

The colour question here is a serious one and on no account must you mix with the Native, classed as black, or the Coloured—the halfcaste or half white person. The white population as you will soon realize have no contacts whatsoever, but the ordinary procedure of addressing a servant or ordering what is wanted. The coloured and blacks are servants to the white and there the position ends. We are also superior to the Chinese, Japs, Indians or anyone that is not "white."

A more serious aspect, and one that the strictest attention must be given, which has no doubt been fully explained to you, but won't harm if I should rub it in a little more, Sex, any type of advancement to anyone who is not perfectly white, is a criminal offense. You just cannot enter into the mildest form of social contact, which in the

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case of a coloured person, needs a very active and wide outlook as a means of being certain. "Is that a white person sunburnt or is this one of your coloured?" is something I have been personally asked by a visitor. We know easily enough, but if in doubt keep your distance as we cannot expect you to go about turning up the edges of clothing looking for white patches. . . .

May the very best of luck be with you on and off the diamond.

Cordially Yours,

G. R. WILLIAMS, President

It is often said, especially by bourgeois writers, that the Bolsheviks must be to blame for the accentuation of the crisis in the colonies. The accusation does us too much honor!

Joseph Stalin, 1925

THE DEATH OF A TRADITION

On Sunday, January 15, 1956, the New York Times Magazine carried a straight-faced, quietly appreciative picture story on the "new and different" West German Streitkräfte (nix Wehrmacht). The first two pictures in the series showed, respectively, a "bedroom" in the barracks at Andernach, and the mess hall. The mattresses, said the caption to the first picture, "are of foam rubber." For the new German soldier, said the caption to the second "picture, "there will be no KP; women will run the kitchen and wait on table."

A week and a day later, Reuters put out the following dispatch, datelined Bonn, quoted as it appeared in the Boston Globe under the headline, GERMAN ARMY BARS WAITRESSES, FOAM MATTRESSES:

Waitresses and foam rubber mattresses have been eliminated from West Germany's infant army in the Federal Republic's first defense economy drive.

Volkmar Hopf, a Defense Ministry official, announced the luxury cuts here today . . . he also said that the cleaning women now working at West Germany's first army camp at Andernach near here would be fired.

The 'frills' in the new American style army were introduced to show that the old hard-as-nails Prussian tradition of the German Wehrmacht was dead.

The Germans will laugh; why shouldn't we?

SOCIALISM—USA AND USSR

BY THE EDITORS OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS

In November, 1955, we printed a number of questions which were submitted to us by a reader, along with our answers ("Socialism—USA and USSR: Some Questions for Discussion," by Alexander Leslie). At the same time, we indicated that we were inviting the editors of *The American Socialist* and *Political Affairs* to try their hands at answering the questions. We printed the *American Socialist* answers in the January issue (p. 376). The *Political Affairs* answers, just received, follow.—THE EDITORS

In answer to the questions which you asked *Political Affairs* to join in discussion, we would make the following comments. We agree with you, as any thoughtful person must, that "short answers must necessarily take a good deal for granted that ought to be explored and explained."

And, as you say, just as your "ideas about these questions are not fixed and frozen," so our own views are subject to change with the changing needs of the people and the country. Marxism is the science of the working class that has already brought about great victories of socialism. It is of course not a dogma and therefore cannot give a set series of answers to set questions like a catechism. It is certain that the course of development toward socialism in our country, and after, will be different from the forms it takes in other countries.

We think that the General Secretary of the Communist Party, Eugene Dennis, expressed this idea well when he said recently:

When and how socialism will be brought about is up to the majority of the American people. We Communists believe that ultimately some kind of workers' and farmers' government, based on a united and class-conscious working class and a militant alliance of labor, the Negro people and the toiling farmers, will effect the transition from capitalism to socialism. Likewise, we are sure that this will be a truly American government. It will be headed by an American president and act through an American Congress which would be—for the first time in our nation's history—genuinely of, for, and by the people. And as for us Communists, we desire, and advocate that this people's democracy shall be established by constitutional and democratic processes. (*Political Affairs*, February 1956, p. 10.)

The author of the questions you submit assumes that there has existed a Marxist movement, notably in the Soviet Union, which

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advocates as a Marxian dogma "rule by a single party"; that "the governing party" there "seeks to impose administratively its aesthetic and ideological standards on cultural and scientific workers and on the general public"; and that the Communist Parties of other lands advocate and practice suppression of political freedom "and the right of dissent."

None of these assumptions is true.

That there have been extraordinary difficulties in the creation and development of socialist democracy in the USSR—as with all great pioneering events in history—no one will deny. The Soviet Union was the *first* country to establish socialism. This was a truly epoch-making achievement. It established the working class as the rulers of the country and thus from its inception infinitely enhanced the actual rights and freedoms of the masses. It had to carry this out under conditions of complete capitalist encirclement, savage intervention, chronic espionage and subversion financed from without. It had to feel its way without any previous examples to draw on, sometimes erring in lack of vigilance, sometimes allowing distortions of a contrary nature to develop. But this socialist democracy vigorously proves its real nature by the way in which it uncovers its own mistakes and rouses the widest number of people to join in correcting them. This could not happen in a society based on the assumptions in your correspondent's questions.

The American people's decision for socialism will take place after socialism has been triumphant in many countries. Our own country, in such a new world situation, will face nothing like the problems of the wars of intervention and the Hitler invasion. There will be no other power capable of organizing a Project X, or a "Crusade for (capitalist) Freedom" against a socialist America. These changed circumstances will vastly alter the forms of social development here as compared with other countries. With this conception of the situation as a background, our answers to the questions are as follows:

Question 1: Under what circumstances (if any) should civil rights in a socialist America be denied to anti-socialist individuals or groups who are not practicing, actively planning, or inciting violence?

There should not be any curtailment of the civil liberties of such groups. But the key achievement of socialism in this field will be that it will bring about the fullest flowering of civil liberties and political freedom, first and foremost for the overwhelming mass of the people who are denied these liberties in the fullest sense today.

Question 2: Can the outlawing of propaganda which incites racial or national hatred be accomplished in a manner consistent with the First Amendment? If not, should the Constitution be amended, and how?

SOCIALISM—USA AND USSR

Racist propaganda should be outlawed now; there is no need to wait for a socialist America for that. This would no more challenge the First Amendment than do libel laws.

Question 3: Is the leadership of all or virtually all public bodies by one party inevitable in any socialist state? If not, would it nonetheless be desirable in a socialist America?

In general, the assumptions in the question indicate a certain confusion on the relation between parties and democracy. The number of parties does not indicate the breadth of democracy. There can be many parties and no democracy, one party and full democracy, two parties and precious little democracy. American bourgeois propaganda places the two-party system as the height of democracy. This ignores facts. The multi-party systems to Western Europe are no less democratic, and may be more democratic, than our two-party system.

In the Revolutionary period of our own history, and for some years thereafter, the general assumption was that democracy meant unanimity. Then, in our Republic, there were no political parties, and, as is well known, Washington, for example, was twice elected President without opposition.

A socialist society necessarily is led by the vanguard party of the working class, the party of Marxism-Leninism. This, however, is not the same as one-party rule, nor does it mean the non-existence of dissenting or opposition parties. In a socialist America there may well be a coalition of popular and democratic parties sharing jointly in state power. And in a socialist America we believe that there will also be freedom for the functioning of a dissenting or opposition party so long as it does not engage in efforts to overthrow the government by force and violence.

Question 4: Is the control of mass communications by a single party inevitable in any socialist state? If not, should some degree of access to and control of mass communications be guaranteed, in a socialist America to non-socialist and/or anti-socialist groups and individuals?

It is not inevitable that a single party shall control the mass media; this flows from what has been said above. There will be access, we believe, to such media by other parties or groups (and no doubt there will be such even in an America that has made the democratic decision for a new society). These will be subject, we think, to the decisions of public bodies expressing the will of the vast majority of the people.

Question 5: In a socialist America, to what degree (if any) should the government or governing party seek to impose administratively its aesthetic and ideological standards on cultural and scientific workers and on the general public?

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There will be no "administrative imposition" of cultural standards in a socialist America. Of course, cultures reflect their social bases; there will develop socialist standards out of the people's needs and not out of any "administrative imposition." "Administrative imposition" is the bugaboo of anti-socialist propaganda coming for generations from capitalist apologists who so easily ignore the visible and concealed imposition of pro-capitalist standards in the culture of today. Under socialism, the people will seek and require higher standards than are permitted today; they will encourage art and science, and artists and scientists with a fullness and variety and freedom impossible today. Then our national genius will truly flower.

In conclusion: all who advocate socialism face a creative challenge in finding the ways to make socialism more meaningful to our fellow-Americans. Obviously this requires popular education for socialism and especially participation in the mass struggle, joining hand-in-hand with the labor movement, the Negro people, the farming millions, and all Americans who seek to defend civil liberties against McCarthyism and racism, to defend peace against the war-plotters, to defend the economic interests of the masses against monopoly capital. Without this, socialism in America would remain only a matter of speculation and a utopian dream.

BOUND VOLUMES

Volume 7 of *Monthly Review*, which runs from May 1955 through April 1956, is complete with this issue. It contains 512 pages including an index. It will be bound, as in other years, in a beautiful wine-colored linen cloth, with gold lettering on the red-leather label on the spine. It will be priced at \$7 and will be available in a few weeks.

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CIVIL LIBERTIES TODAY: AN INDISPENSABLE GUIDE

BY HENRY PRATT FAIRCHILD

Corliss Lamont knows whereof he writes.* Not only has he been for many years active in the organizational defense of civil liberties, but also more than once he has been the personal target of some of the most vicious bolts of the enemies of freedom.

As the sub-title indicates, this book is an overall survey of civil liberties (practically restricted to the United States) in their historical background and in their contemporary situation. The book starts with an excellent chapter on "The Ideal of Civil Liberties." As early as page 7, the author propounds a generalization which he evidently regards as fundamental since he italicizes it and reiterates it in subsequent pages: "*Civil liberties are indivisible.*" For the understanding of Lamont's entire thesis it is highly important to recognize in just what sense he means this. For while this is a truth, it is only a half truth. Civil liberties are—that is, *should be*—indivisible with respect to the persons or classes who enjoy them. As the author well demonstrates, once the principle or practice of restriction creeps into a society it is almost sure to extend its baneful influence until nobody is immune. But with respect to the areas of interest in which they operate, liberties, like freedoms, are highly and inevitably separable. In a given society, it is possible to have freedom of divorce but not freedom of the press, freedom to engage in private business but not freedom of assembly. Of course, once the spirit of intolerance becomes rampant in a society, there is no telling where it will manifest itself, and perhaps, also, the use of the adjective "civil" in this connection indicates a defensible qualification.

Another very cogent generalization appears on page 15: "The lesson of history is that the level of liberty in any land tends to sink to that accorded its most unpopular minority." This is a recognition that there is in society a sort of "Gresham's Law" far wider in its application and more diversified than in its merely monetary connotation.

The next chapter deals primarily with the clash between the

Henry Pratt Fairchild, Emeritus Professor of Sociology at New York University, is Chairman of Monthly Review Associates and a frequent contributor to these pages.

* Corliss Lamont, *Freedom Is As Freedom Does: Civil Liberties Today*, Horizon Press, New York, 1956, \$3.95.

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Un-American Activities Committee and the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship in which Lamont was deeply involved as Chairman of the latter organization, and which resulted in the imprisonment because of his courageous and unflinching behavior of Richard Morford, Executive Director of the Council. Mention is also made of the cases of the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee and "The Hollywood Ten." In this connection, by the way, occurs one of the few inaccuracies in the book. Highly and deservedly commending the Ten, the author says, "These ten men served the maximum contempt sentence of one year in jail." The fact is that one of them, after serving four months and seventeen days in prison, recanted, "named names," and returned to the lucrative practice of his profession. Of no great importance in itself, this incident is significant for the light it throws on the whole nature of the situation.

The next chapter, "My Challenge to McCarthy," as its title indicates, is the account of a personal, but definitely typical, experience of the author, the issue being largely a matter of books.

The next chapter offers an illuminating picture of the general operations of the Congressional investigating committees. The only comment that needs to be made on it is that the author might have stressed a little more explicitly the crucial fact that persons summoned before these tribunals are called as *witnesses*, not as persons accused of any crime or misdemeanor. In keeping with the ostensible purpose of these committees, they are called to give information. Once they are sworn in, it becomes glaringly clear that the information desired is, first, about themselves, and second, about other people. This is why the Fifth Amendment has proved such a useful protection. The procedure adopted enables the committees to justify their conduct on the ground that they are not courts of law and are not bound by the rules and conventions that govern courts. But it also illustrates the far departure they have made from the legitimate functions of such Congressional committees. It is this blatant hypocrisy and subterfuge that makes the operations of these bodies so abhorrent to all the principles of fairness and decency that have been considered inherent in the American conception of citizenship.

There follow three chapters which deal, with the author's characteristic thoroughness and clarity, with "Suppression Through Law" (the Smith Act and the Communist trials), "The Loyalty-Security Program" (Truman's Executive Order and its sequelae), and "Police State in the Making" (perjury, passports, and other related matters).

Thus far the treatment has had to do primarily with federal measures of restriction. Chapter 8 summarizes the similar or related practices of the individual states. New York and California share an unenviable prominence.

CIVIL LIBERTIES TODAY

The next three chapters show how the drive for conformity extends itself beyond the political realm into the spheres of cultural expression and economic activity. These illustrate what the author has in mind when he speaks of the "indivisibility" of civil rights. There are no bounds to the ambitions of the dictators.

The next to the last chapter, "The Decline of the Civil Liberties Union," is a remarkable, almost a unique, document. It is an explicit account, play by play, of the process by which the very stronghold of civil rights became infected with the prevailing virus of fear and discrimination, and which led eventually to the severance by Mr. Lamont of all connection with the organization. Names are named and documents quoted. The author's surmise—"if my account offends some of those involved" (p. 262)—may be taken as a masterpiece of understatement. What a sad story! It is to be hoped that the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee, to which Mr. Lamont has transferred his activity and support, may be able to steer clear of similar pitfalls.

In a final chapter, the author displays a qualified optimism with respect to the present trend of affairs in the civil liberties field, but asserts his firm conviction that the time will never come when a vigorous fight to defend liberties from various forms of attack will not be necessary.

One remaining reference may be made to a small fault of omission, rather than commission. The McCarran-Walter Act (treated in Chapter 5), dealing as it does with the complex and highly technical question of immigration, requires much more detailed—and perhaps more expertly informed—analysis than the author has space to give it. But this, like the few previous criticisms, is merely an expression of every reviewer's compulsion to pick a few flaws in his specimen. The book as a whole is a magnificent compendium of the whole subject in its present development. (Too bad it could not have included the latest—and eventually final—features of the Melish case!) It is not only an immensely valuable historical reference work, but also a practical guide for the conduct of those who in the future shall be entangled in this net of bigotry and hypocrisy. In particular, it illuminates the relative desirability and effectiveness of recourse to the First, Fifth, and other Amendments. It is a real *vade mecum* for the persecuted.

The worth of the volume is augmented by a thoughtful introduction by H. H. Wilson, and by excellent documentary notes, bibliography, and index. It should receive very wide attention. One wonders to what extent this book will be suppressed and its author victimized by the very forces which it exposes. It will be interesting to watch.

WORLD EVENTS

By Scott Nearing

How Long Will the Boom Last?

Private enterprise economy, during at least two centuries, has passed through alternating periods of prosperity and depression. These boom-bust experiences have consisted of minor ups and downs such as the cycle of 1953-1956, of major disturbances like the cycle from the peak of prosperity in 1928 through the depression of the 1930s, the long-term expansions and contractions expressed primarily in the rise and fall of prices. The high production, frantic spending, and reckless investment in new capital goods which have marked the present boom are a culmination of the period of major economic expansion associated with the wars of 1936-1956, and of the long-term price expansion associated with the cycle of wars that began in the decade 1894-1905.

World economy, in 1956, is divided into three major segments—first, the area of capitalist enterprise, clustered around the economy of the United States; second, socialist enterprise, shepherded by the Soviet Union; and, third, a number of neutralist or uncommitted national economies. The boom which we are discussing exists in the capitalist sector of world economy. Historically, it is associated with the upsetting economic disturbances resulting from the revolutionary changes in technology and the catastrophic destructiveness of war during the past four decades. Geographically, it centers in the United States and Canada; in countries like Sweden, Switzerland, Australia, which escaped direct war damage; and in Germany, the Low Countries, and Japan, which are making desperate efforts to dig out from under their war ruins and to reoccupy their prewar productive and marketing positions in the world economy.

Since 1945, the primary responsibility for restoring and stabilizing capitalist economy has been assumed and carried by the United States. In a very real sense, not only the development of the present cycle of expansion of Western economy but the future of capitalism is in the hands of United States economic and political policy makers.

United States private enterprise economy is a scramble for self and power, in which the ambitious, the greedy, the predatory, and the ruthless competitors climb over each other in their efforts to get to the apex of the wealth-power pyramid.

Four regulatory factors provide the framework for the economic-jungle struggle which is presently engrossing such a large share of the time and attention of United States businessmen. The first is the concentration of ownership and organizational control of the economy in the hands of a few great trusts and combines. The second factor is the broadening of government participation in the economy as owner, manager, and, particularly, as the buyer of commodities and labor power. The third factor is the investigatory and restrictive control exercised by government over the economy. The fourth factor is the mushrooming "national defense" or military apparatus, which, by its own accounting, now has equipment and supplies which are inventoried at some \$122 billion, with an annual spending allowance of some \$40 billion.

The background for the economic struggle which has built up United States economy to its present boom level is made up of several important historical forces. First among them is the availability and durability of natural resources, particularly the non-replaceable ones, such as ores and fuels. Second is the extent of the domestic and foreign markets which will absorb goods and investment-seeking capital. Third is the tolerance of the peoples, both inside and outside the United States—their tolerance of the present fantastic preparations for nuclear war, of continued imperialism-colonialism, and of the gross inequality in the distribution of world wealth and income. Fourth, and finally, there is the rise of an avowedly collectivist planned social pattern, which is offering its techniques as an alternative to the social system which is booming in North America and bumping along elsewhere.

Within the boom itself there are numerous complementary and conflicting forces. First among them is the capacity of the North American economy to tap new sources of power, develop new resources, create new synthetics, produce new want-stimulating gadgets, and develop new marketing areas for its increasing output of commodities and profits. Second is the willingness of government to subsidize lagging segments of the economy—shipbuilding, shipping, agriculture, and the like. Third, the growing resistance to present tax levels. Fourth, the limitations imposed by inflation on further expansion of public and private debt and credit. Fifth, the mounting difficulty of continuing present United States military spending in the face of the worldwide clamor for disarmament and peace. Finally, there is The Gap between gross national product and consumer spending (\$135 billions per year at the moment) and the huge volume of profits. (Corporate profits at the end of 1955 were running at a rate of \$45 billion per year, compared with the \$10 billion high point at the top of the boom in the 1920s.)

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Readers with scanty training in the use of economic and sociological terms will find this description of the framework, the background, and the internal structure of the present boom somewhat complicated and baffling. So say we all. It is the intricacy of the problem and the large number of little-known factors which make prediction difficult. From this survey, however, it is possible for us to draw some reasonably dependable conclusions.

First conclusion. The boom cannot go on forever. A period of such rapid expansion as that from 1940 to 1955 will come to an end and contraction will set in. Even the *Economic Report of the President* for January, 1956, grudgingly admits this: "The very qualities of Americans which largely account for the expansive power of our economy also made the process of growth irregular. . . . An imbalance between production and sales is occasionally bound to occur." (P. 10.) We do not agree with the President's economic advisers in attributing depression to "caution" and "pessimism." We are merely calling attention to the wide recognition, among academic, business, and government economists that "an inflationary boom" like the one through which we are now passing will be compensated and corrected by a complementary bust.

Second firm conclusion. Four of the major factors in the current United States boom—military spending, house construction, the re-tooling of heavy industry, the marketing (largely on credit) of automobiles and lesser gadgets, all seem to have passed their peak.

Third firm conclusion. Agriculture, shipping, shipbuilding, and other older industries are already depressed, and despite government subsidies show no signs of recovery.

Fourth firm conclusion. Barring a general war, the world situation in the area of socialist construction, in the Asian-African colonial areas, and in Western Europe is not favorable for a continuance of the United States economic boom.

On Seizing the Initiative

General Eisenhower, with his military background, came to the Presidency in 1953 determined to follow one of the major axioms of successful war making by "seizing the initiative." Three years later, in the opening weeks of 1956, Premier Bulganin and his Soviet colleagues were still out in front, this time urging treaties of peace and friendship on the West, while the Eisenhower-Eden team were shifting from one foot to another, mumbling incoherently and almost inaudibly: "Are they really sincere?" "Do they mean what they say?" "If you are serious, prove it by deeds." "We also are for peace, but. . . ." Without question, the Bulganin-Krushchev team was still carrying the ball and their Eisenhower-Eden opposite numbers were

still dawdling, shuffling, side-stepping, and day-dreaming.

President Eisenhower's uncertainty and indecision are due partly to his inclination to look at both sides, and hope that things will take a favorable turn. The big factor, however, is not the Eisenhower all-things-to-all-men personality, but the historical situation.

Capitalists held the initiative firmly from the end of the Napoleonic wars in 1815 to the opening years of the present century. They invented, discovered, organized, grabbed markets, piled up profits, captured colonies, built empires, as they drove aggressively toward the accumulation of wealth and power.

Conditions are far different today. Markets are glutted, wars of survival have disrupted and disorganized capitalist economy, politics, society. Empires are crumbling. The colonial peoples of Asia and Africa are on the march toward independence and peaceful co-existence. A third of mankind is busily building a collective, cooperative social order, and with Khrushchev, in his seven-hour speech to the recent Communist Congress in Moscow, pitying the inept, blundering, blustering, doddering Western world.

Capitalists seized the initiative two centuries ago and moved with the forces of history. Their feudal opponents were on the defensive—trying vainly to hold together the fragments of a shattered social pattern. Today it is the Eisenhower-Eden team which is attempting to hold the line of the status quo, while the Bulganin-Krushchevs are running circles around them.

"The Military Athens of the World"

General Maxwell D. Taylor, Chief of Staff of the United States Army, told the editors of *U.S. News & World Report* (February 3, 1956): "We seldom recognize the fact that we're the No. 1 military nation in the free world. We think of ourselves as anti-militaristic, and we are, but force of circumstance and history has made us the focal point of military activity outside of the Iron Curtain."

Leavenworth, Kansas, is the seat of the United States Command and General Staff College. This, said General Taylor, is "the military Athens of the world" where men from many nations "come to study our military methods."

Question: "How many countries are sending people to be trained?"

General Taylor: "I would say more than 50."

Question: "Haven't we just about replaced Germany as the teacher of military tactics to the rest of the world?"

General Taylor: "We have." And he added, "I think that it's time we acknowledged our own military stature."

Let's face it, with General Taylor. The United States is not merely

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the best-armed among the nations of the West, with the largest outlays for the newest weapons, but the military scientists and technicians of the Western world are coming to the United States to be trained in organized destruction and mass murder. The people of the United States, as General Taylor says, are anti-militarist, but the tax dollars which these anti-militaristic people pour into the federal treasury are being used, to the tune of some \$40 billion per year, by the armed forces, not only to "defend" the United States, but to arm, equip, and train representatives from fifty nations in the science and art of war.

More Force and Violence

Ambassadors of the United States and the Chinese Peoples Republic have spent five months in negotiating certain questions on which the two governments are at odds. The central issue, and the issue of greatest potential danger is the island of Formosa (Taiwan). On January 18, 1956, the Chinese issued a statement covering these negotiations. Three days later, the United States government answered and supplemented the Chinese statement.

Both parties agree in principle upon the renunciation of force as an instrument of international policy. The United States statement of January 21 elaborates: "It is not suggested that either of us should renounce any policy objectives which we consider we are legitimately entitled to achieve but only that we renounce the use of force to implement these policies. . . . The United States . . . has agreed to refrain in its international relations from the threat or use of force. . . . The use of force as an instrument of national policy violates international law, constitutes a threat to international peace, and prejudices the interests of the entire world community."

The United States representatives therefore proposed on October 8, 1955, that neither side, in the Taiwan area, will resort to force "except defensively." The Washington statement affirms: "The right of individual and collective self-defense against armed attack is inherent; it is recognized in international law; it is specifically affirmed in the Charter of the United Nations." "The United States is not occupying Taiwan. . . . It has rights and responsibilities in the Taiwan area; also it has a mutual defense treaty. Accordingly it is present in the Taiwan area."

We have stated the issue in Washington's official language because we want to make it clear that the inherent principle of the use of force in individual and collective self-defense furnishes a legal justification for the presence of United States armed forces wherever there is a mutual defense treaty—NATO, SEATO, the Association of American States. "Legitimate self defense" thus permits the Wash-

ington government to girdle the planet with military bases, to occupy the seven seas with United States fighting ships, and to fill the airways with Air Force bombers. It permits the State Department, three times in three years, to move to the brink of war, using force and the threat of force to achieve its policy objectives. It allows United States air and naval units to occupy the sea and air around and over Formosa. Then, by legalistic trickstering, it permits a United States ambassador to propose to a Chinese ambassador that they renounce force and the threat of force in dealing with Taiwan.

Germany Is Rearming

West Germany has been industrially rehabilitated to the point at which it can once again produce the tools and machines of mechanized war. Former members of the Nazi war machine are the planners and organizers of the new German military apparatus and the trainers of its manpower. In order that they may be properly prepared for their new duties, picked men from among their numbers are now in British and United States staff colleges, studying the latest weapons and the most approved techniques of scientific warfare.

Only a decade has passed since men by millions were fighting and dying to disarrange Germany. Today that country is being rearmed as a result of determined State Department insistence.

The up-rush of German industrial rehabilitation gives assurance that military re-equipment will be equally rapid. Thus, the well established pattern for war inside the capitalist world is being restored. When The Day comes around again, Germany will gobble up France and the Low Countries at the first gulp. Barring interference from the East, the whole of West Europe will become a military base from which German business men, militarists, and politicos, with United States backing, will be prepared to reunite the Fatherland, satisfy their economic ambitions, and extend their political influence far into East Europe.

Such is The Plan, made in Washington, for World War III, the liquidation of Communist influence in Europe as the first step toward the restoration of Western control over the erstwhile colonies in Asia, and the suppression of unrest and rebellion among the colonial peoples of Africa and Latin America. The United States answer to the planet-wide popular demand for an end to atomic weapon manufacture and testing, disarmament, the abolition of imperialism-colonialism, is the biggest military budget, the most efficient fighting planes, the most destructive guided missiles, and the most formidable airplane carriers ever turned out by human genius.

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MONTHLY REVIEW

(continued from inside back cover)

about stationary for more months than we like to count. How can this logjam be broken? Can you get more subscribers among your friends and acquaintances? What techniques do you think we ought to experiment with to reach new circles of potential readers? We need all the help you can give us.

We are happy to be able to announce a tentative June publication date for *Was Justice Done?*—*The Rosenberg-Sobell Case*, by Professor Malcolm Sharp of the University of Chicago, with an Introduction by Professor Harold C. Urey, also of the University of Chicago. Coming from the pen of an eminent legal authority, this book can be expected to play in relation to the Rosenberg-Sobell case, somewhat the same role that Lord Jowitt's book has played in the Hiss case, the chief difference being that Professor Sharp, unlike Lord Jowitt, has an intimate first-hand knowledge of the facts and many of the personalities involved in the case about which he writes. We think *Was Justice Done?* is an important work, and we want it to have as large a circulation as you and we can give it. We are now accepting pre-publication orders at the reduced price of \$2.50. After publication, the price will be \$3.50. Please send us all the orders you can get as soon as possible.

Please note that bound volumes of MR, current and past, are for sale. For details, see p. 500.

Harry Sacher, one of the defense lawyers in the first Communist Smith Act trial, has been sentenced to six months in jail and a \$1,000 fine for refusing to answer questions before the Senate Subcommittee on Internal Security. Mr. Sacher, refusing to invoke the Fifth Amendment, told the Committee: "My conscience dictates to me that I shall not, under compulsion, answer today any more than John Freeborn Lilburne answered in the 1640s to the Court of Star Chamber and on the same grounds, Mr. Chairman, on the grounds that it is incompatible with the dignity of the individual to make compulsory disclosure of his thoughts and his ideas and his beliefs." We admire Mr. Sacher's forthrightness and courage, and we hope with all our hearts that his appeal to the higher courts meets with success.

The Nearing-Lamont meeting of MR Associates on February 29th was a great success. The hall was jam-packed. On the strength of this, the Associates have taken a larger hall for the Dunham-Wilson meeting on Wednesday, April 11. We hope New York area readers will turn out in large numbers, and bring their friends, to this fine program. Details in the box below.

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(continued from inside front cover)

as "Didn't you tell the class at the University of New Hampshire . . . that socialism was inevitable in this country?" can be asked under cover of investigating the threat of violent overthrow, then it is hard to see what limits there are to the power of legislative committees to invade the classroom. Paul Sweezy intends to make the most of opportunities offered by his impending cross-country speaking trip to explain and discuss the issues in the case, especially with academic people, whose support can be of the greatest importance and assistance.

While on the subject of Sweezy's tour, we can give the following itinerary: Denver, April 4-6; Los Angeles, April 8-15; San Francisco, April 16-21; Portland, April 22-23; Seattle, April 24-25; Minneapolis, April 26-27; Madison, April 28-30; Chicago, May 1-6; Detroit, May 7-9. Announcements of the exact times and places of meetings will be made locally. This year's traveling editor is looking forward to meeting the largest possible number of MR readers.

We have had several encouraging reports about libraries buying Harvey O'Connor's *Empire of Oil* after being urged to do so by subscribers. Have you asked for it in your college or public library? If not, please don't forget next time you happen to be there. Or better still, make a special trip as soon as possible.

The March issue met with a most gratifying response from readers. Not for a long, long time have we received so many "best yet" letters, a kind that holds a special place in the affections of all editors. Here are a few representative compliments:

From an oldtimer: I feel impelled to tell you that this whole March number of MR is brimful of rich and exciting reading—a superb piece of work. The letter to Joan is nothing less than a masterpiece! Distinctly I recall how excited my little local became over Blatchford's *Merrie England*.

From a California housewife: We cannot resist the temptation to add our praise of the fine work you are doing. In these times when the smear and half-truth are almost acknowledged weapons of both the extreme Right and Left, your calm and carefully considered position on various issues is balm for the harrassed reader. Thank you for keeping alive the dignity and beauty of the progressive movement which numerous factions in America today are trying to steal from it.

From a college professor: What a real wonderful thing you are doing. No foolin', you guys think so damn well that it just makes me feel good to sit down and think with you, as it were, reading your Review of the Month and the special articles you write. Sure, I sometimes disagree with your conclusions on such things as the extent to which Ike's personal sense of war is important (I think it more so than I gather you do), or such points; but all in all, month after month, you've been playing in the same league as DiMaggio and Ted Williams: up there every time taking the full cut. And by God, you know, I want you to know—very simply and directly—that I appreciate the hell out of it, as they say in this somewhat backward mid-West. Could I send along more money, I would, but this comes from the heart.

If these compliments are even half way deserved—as we hope they are—we find it hard to resist the conclusion that MR ought to be reaching many more readers than it is. But the sad truth is that circulation has remained

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